

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended). A nonwoven barrier fabric, comprising;

- a. a frangible fibrous layer comprising a first fibrous component,
- b. a substrate layer comprising a second fibrous component ~~and/or unit-~~
~~area film component,~~
- c. wherein said first fibrous component of the frangible fibrous layer exhibits an elastic modulus at least 20% less than that of the second fibrous component ~~and/or~~
~~unit area component~~ of the substrate layer,
- d. said frangible fibrous layer being deposited upon said substrate layer and subjected to external energy such that the first fibrous component fragments into multiple sub-fibers, and
- e. said sub-fibers being integrated into the substrate layer by said external energy to which said frangible fibrous layer is subjected.

Claim 2 (previously presented). A nonwoven barrier fabric, comprising;

- a. a frangible fibrous layer comprising a first fibrous component,
- b. a substrate layer comprising a second fibrous component,
- c. said second fibrous component comprising finite staple length fibers,

d. wherein said first fibrous component of the frangible fibrous layer exhibits an elastic modulus at least 20% less than that of the second fibrous component and/or unit area component of the substrate layer,

e. said frangible fibrous layer being deposited upon said substrate layer and subjected to hydraulic energy such that the first fibrous component fragments into multiple sub-fibers, said sub-fibers having a diameter equal to or less than 500 nanometers; and

f. said sub-fibers being hydroentangled into the substrate layer by said hydraulic energy to which said frangible fibrous layer is subjected.

Claim 3 (original). A nonwoven barrier fabric as in Claim 2, wherein said nonwoven fabric is a component in a medical barrier article.

Claim 4 (original). A medical barrier article as in Claim 3, wherein said article is a medical gown.

Claim 5 (original). A medical barrier article as in Claim 3, wherein said article is a medical drape.

Claim 6 (original). A medical barrier article as in Claim 3, wherein said article is a central supply wrap.

Claim 7 (original). A nonwoven barrier fabric as in Claim 2, wherein said nonwoven fabric is a component in a hygiene article.

Claim 8 (original). A hygiene article as in Claim 7, wherein said article is a diaper.

Claim 9 (original). A hygiene article as in Claim 7, wherein said article is a feminine hygiene pad.

Claim 10 (currently amended). A nonwoven barrier fabric, comprising;

- a. a frangible fibrous layer comprising a first fibrous component,
- b. a substrate layer comprising a second fibrous component ~~and/or film~~ component,
- c. said frangible fibrous layer being deposited upon said substrate layer and subjected to hydraulic energy such that the first fibrous component fragments into multiple sub-fibers, and
- e. said sub-fibers being integrated into the substrate layer by said hydraulic energy to which said frangible fibrous layer is subjected.

Claim 11 (previously presented). A nonwoven barrier fabric as in Claim 10, wherein said nonwoven fabric is a component in a medical barrier article.

Claim 12 (new). A nonwoven barrier fabric comprising:

- a. a frangible fibrous layer comprising a first fibrous component,
- b. a substrate layer comprising a unit-area film component,
- c. wherein said first fibrous component of the frangible fibrous layer exhibits an elastic modulus at least 20% less than that of the unit area film component of the substrate layer,
- d. said frangible fibrous layer being deposited upon said substrate layer and subjected to external energy such that the first fibrous component fragments into multiple sub-fibers, and
- e. said sub-fibers being integrated into the substrate layer by said external energy to which said frangible fibrous layer is subjected.

Claim 13 (new). A nonwoven barrier fabric, comprising;

- a. a frangible fibrous layer comprising a first fibrous component,
- b. a substrate comprising a film component,
- c. said frangible fibrous layer being deposited upon said substrate layer and subjected to hydraulic energy such that the first fibrous component fragments into multiple sub-fibers, and
- e. said sub-fibers being integrated into the substrate layer by said hydraulic energy to which said frangible fibrous layer is subjected.